

DIVERSITY COUNCIL MINUTES: March 11, 2009

The regular bi-monthly meeting of the Diversity Council was held on Thursday, March 11, 2010, in the Knudsen Training Room, located on the first floor of the Jessie Parker Building in Des Moines, Iowa. The meeting was called to order by Chair Preston Daniels at 2:40 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

James Ballard, John Deere & Company, Retired
Nancy Berggren, Department of Administrative Services – Human Resources Enterprise (DAS-HRE)
Preston Daniels, Department of Human Rights (DHR), Chair
Renee Hardman, Bankers Trust, Co-Chair
Reginald Jackson, Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.
Robin Jenkins, DAS-HRE
Alba Perez, Greater Des Moines Partnership
Ralph Rosenberg, Iowa Civil Rights Commission
Miriam Tyson, Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED)
Ray Walton, Department of Administrative Services (DAS)
Stephen Wooderson, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS)

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA CONFERENCE CALL

Shirley Hicks, Iowa School for the Deaf, Retired
Dinh VanLo, Tai Village, Inc.

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jim Larew, Governor's Office
Jonathan Thorup, Department of Public Safety

OTHER ATTENDEES

Judy Akre, DAS-HRE
Susan Churchill, DAS-HRE, responsible for taking meeting minutes
Beverly Couch, IDED
Jesus Estrada, DAS-HRE
Bev Schmeling, IVRS
Jeff Thompson, Attorney General's Office
Bill West, DAS-HRE

AGENDA ITEMS

- I. Opening Comments – Preston Daniels

- II. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes of January 14, 2010.
 - A. The Council had no updates.
 - B. Minutes approved.
- III. New Business – The Council had nothing to report.
- IV. Diversity Recommendations – Preston Daniels and Miriam Tyson met with Russell Lovell, Professor of Law and Associate Dean at Drake University, to discuss the recommendations submitted to Governor Culver by the Council in June 2009 and the report of the State's hiring practices from April 30, 2007, by CPS, an independent consulting firm.
- V. Progress on the Recommendations Submitted to the Governor in June 2009 – Jeff Thompson.
 - A. Jeff Thompson focused on four recommendations related specifically to the hiring process:
 - 1. Recommendation B: *Departments should strive to have a hiring pool of applicants of diverse background, i.e. disability, ethnicity, gender, and age. Justification must be made to the Director when a qualified candidate in an underutilized category is not hired.*
 - 2. Recommendation C: *DAS must ensure next year's Diversity Plans are specific in identifying methods that departments will use in expanding, when applicable, the diversity of their workforce.*
 - 3. Recommendation D: *Department Directors' performance evaluations should include a diversity component, which would reflect specific achievements in the areas of diversity recruitment, hiring, training, and retention.*
 - 4. Recommendation E: *The Governor should commission DAS to review, evaluate, and make necessary changes to the current Affirmative Action Process within state government; including, refining the data used in the Affirmative Action Report.*
 - B. In Recommendations B, C, and D above, the State must be founded on a firm Affirmative Action Program.
 - C. Recommendation E:
 - 1. The Governor's endorsement of this recommendation will help the State moving forward.
 - 2. The State must be conscious of the Supreme Court decision last year regarding firefighters in Pennsylvania, where:
 - a. Candidates were required to take a test to see who would receive a promotion.
 - b. African-Americans did not test well, so the test results were thrown out.
 - c. A white person and a Latino person sued the State of Pennsylvania, because they would have gotten promotions had the State not thrown out the test results.
 - d. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the firefighters.
 - D. The State must update its entire Affirmative Action Program by examining and analyzing underutilization and applicant flow data.
- VI. Subcommittee Reports
 - A. Training Strategy – Robin Jenkins reported that the Subcommittee will not be meeting until the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) decides on a structure for the training.

- B. Accountability Strategy – Renee Hardman reported that the Subcommittee indentified five ways to include diversity in the decision-making process in state government:
 - 1. Performance reviews need to address diversity issues.
 - 2. The Diversity Progress Report should become part of the performance review for agency directors and elected officials.
 - 3. The State should develop a "trends report," based on the Diversity Progress Report, and provide it to the Council quarterly or bi-annually.
 - 4. A "Best Practices Award" should be created for state government.
 - 5. Agency directors should be required to attend one Diversity Council meeting per year.
- C. Diversity Plans Strategy – nothing to report.
- D. Communications Strategy
 - 1. Miriam Tyson reported that the Subcommittee would like to conduct a pilot public forum in Ames with the DOT over the lunch hour.
 - 2. Nancy Berggren suggested beginning with a smaller agency in Des Moines.
- E. Organizational Strategy – Reginald Jackson spoke on behalf of the Subcommittee.
 - 1. The Subcommittee had a series of questions for the Council:
 - a. Has the Council satisfied the requirements of Executive Order Four?
 - b. If so, what is the Council's role now?
 - c. Should the Governor-appointed Diversity Council be replaced by an internal council?
 - d. Should the Diversity Council take on an oversight or advisory role?
 - 2. The Council decided to convene for one hour in April to discuss their role moving forward.

VII. Public Comment – No one from the audience had a comment.

AGENDA ITEM FOR NEXT MEETING: Organizational Strategy: Role of the Diversity Council

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m. A special meeting of the Diversity Council will be held on Wednesday, April 7, 2010, from 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. in the Knudsen Training Room, located on the first floor of the Jessie Parker Building, 510 East 12th Street, Des Moines, IA. The Council will determine their regular meeting schedule at this time.